

widely believed to have been unfair and politically motivated, Saro-Wiwa and eight others—Barinem Kiobel, Saturday Doobee, Paul Levura, Nordu Eawo, Felix Nuate, Daniel Gbokoo, John Kpuinen and Baribor Bera—were convicted of complicity in the 1994 murders, and sentenced to death by a civil disturbances special tribunal run by the military.

Mr. President, when the death sentences of these individuals were first made public, I and many other members of Congress asked General Abacha to have mercy and exercise his prerogative of executive clemency. We wrote to President Clinton and made calls to the Nigerian representatives to the United Nations and Washington. But, alas, our efforts were to no avail. The nine men were hanged on November 10, 1995.

Now, Mr. President, 19 other Ogoni activists remain in prison in Nigeria on the same trumped up charges and could face a similar fate. According to reports from several human rights organizations, the Ogoni 19 have been severely beaten and tortured, and many are suffering from ill health. They reportedly are kept in insanitary prison conditions, are denied food and medical treatment, and rarely, if at all, are granted access to outside visitors, including their lawyers. This lack of contact has stalled attempts to have the detainees released on bail or brought to trial before ordinary, civilian courts. The situation is so dire that, in August, the detainees went on a hunger strike for 10 days to protest the continuing obstructions to their release or trial. The authorities reportedly have had no response.

Alas, the deplorable condition of these Ogoni activists is not unique in Nigeria. Hundreds of individuals remain in detention centers or prisons for seemingly political motivations. The flawed judicial process that led to the 1995 death sentences is still in place and threatens the lives of these political prisoners. Numerous Nigerian laws allow for arbitrary detention for reasons ranging from "personal pique by a senior official to 'national security,'" according to information provided to me by the State Department.

With a population of more than 100 million people and vast natural resources, Nigeria has the potential to be one of the most important players on the African stage. But the military junta led by General Abacha is squandering the country's future by rampant corruption, severe economic mismanagement, and brutal policies that threaten basic freedoms. Moreover, the so-called transition program bears little hope of ensuring a transition to a fairly elected civilian government.

As we remember the lives of the Ogoni 9, let us not forget those Nigerians whose struggle for basic freedoms continues even now. I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring this solemn occasion. ●

RETIREMENT FROM CONGRESS OF REP. FLOYD H. FLAKE

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, Adlai E. Stevenson remarked of Eleanor Roosevelt that "She would rather light candles than curse the darkness and her glow has warmed the world." So it is with my dear friend and colleague, Representative FLOYD FLAKE of Queens, who will be retiring from Congress this Saturday, November 15. Few individuals can match his accomplishments, which have materially and spiritually benefited so many. I view his departure as bittersweet. He is going home to his church, answering God's call "to a greater ministry and to a greater work," as he has put it. Surely, his congregants will be happier for his decision. But we will sorely miss him here in Congress.

Representative FLAKE was born in Los Angeles and raised in Houston—1 of 13 children born to parents with fifth- and sixth-grade educations. Modest circumstances. But in the words of an October 19, 1997 New York Times magazine article by James Traub, "they (people who told FLAKE he would never go to college) hadn't reckoned on his mother, who taught the kids how to sew and wash and cook, or his fiercely self-improving father."

Representative FLAKE received an undergraduate degree from Wilberforce University, the first black college in America, founded in 1856 in Ohio under the auspices of the African Methodist Episcopal [A.M.E.] Church and named after the great English statesman and abolitionist, William Wilberforce. From there, on to graduate study at Payne Theological Seminary and Northeastern University and jobs early in his career as a Head Start social worker and market analyst for Xerox.

In 1976, Representative FLAKE—barely 31—became pastor of the Allen A.M.E. Church in Jamaica, Queens. At that time, the church congregation numbered about 1,200; the church's annual budget was about \$250,000. There were three employees. Now, some 20 years later, the congregation has grown to nearly 9,000 souls. The church and its subsidiaries have an annual budget exceeding \$24 million. Tithes and offerings alone exceed \$5 million—this from a mostly middle-class congregation.

When considering Reverend FLAKE's stewardship, the Parable of the Mustard Seed comes to mind. Allen A.M.E. Church-sponsored community development enterprises now include a 300-unit apartment complex for the elderly; the Allen Christian School, which has an enrollment of some 400 elementary students—and a growing waiting list; hundreds of single-family and two-family homes; a strip mall; an office complex; a home care agency; a credit union; and a transportation company. The Allen A.M.E. Church and its subsidiaries employ 800 people. Only Kennedy Airport employs more people in the Sixth District.

In the middle of this remarkable stewardship, he earned a Doctorate of

Ministry degree from the United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH, and he became a Member of Congress. He has ably represented the Sixth District, which covers southern and south-eastern Queens, since 1986. As a result of his efforts, the Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration are building major facilities in the district. As a senior member of the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services, he has been an indefatigable architect of innovative public and private urban investment programs. While other politicians have abandoned urban communities, FLOYD FLAKE has found ways for such communities not only to survive, but to thrive. While others curse the darkness, FLOYD FLAKE lights candles.

Perhaps the capstone of his accomplishments is the new Allen A.M.E. Church cathedral on Merrick Boulevard. The \$23 million cathedral is 93,000 square feet and seats 2,500. It is the largest church structure to be built in New York City since 1954. Heinrich Heine remarked that it takes more than mere opinion to erect a cathedral, it takes conviction. Indeed it does. Reverend Flake secured a \$15 million mortgage for the project from Chase Manhattan Bank Corp.—the largest loan Chase has ever made to a religious institution. That's conviction.

Given all of these commitments, it is understandable that FLOYD FLAKE feels he must go home and minister to his church community full-time. The community will be richer for his presence. We here will be poorer.

Mr. President, the inscription on Sir Christopher Wren's tomb in St. Paul's Cathedral reads, *Si monumentum requiris circumspecte*. "If you would see the man's monument, look around." If you would see FLOYD FLAKE's monument, go to Jamaica, or to St. Alban's, or to Rosedale, or to Laurelton, or to nearly any neighborhood in Queens, and look around.

And so, to my friend, his wife Elaine, his daughters, Aliya and Nailah, and his sons, Rasheed and Hasan, I say, "Godspeed." ●

HEROES SHINE IN NORTH DAKOTA FLOOD

● Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, as my colleagues in the Senate are well aware, one of the Nation's worst weather-related disasters of the year was the devastating flooding in Grand Forks, ND and the entire Red River Valley. This historic flood captured the attention of the Nation in late spring as over 95 percent of the residents of Grand Forks and East Grand Forks were evacuated from their homes and much of North Dakota's second largest city's downtown district was ravaged by fire and water.

Disasters have a way of bringing out the true character of people, and that certainly was the case in North Dakota. History will have a dramatic record of the loss and devastation of